

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Elmwood Cemetery

Other names/site number: VDHR #122-0116

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

Street & number: 238 E. Princess Anne Road

City or town: Norfolk State: VA County: Independent City

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria.

I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A X B X C     D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property     meets     does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register  
☐ determined eligible for the National Register  
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register  
☐ removed from the National Register  
☐ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private: ☐  
Public – Local ☒  
Public – State ☐  
Public – Federal ☐

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s) ☐  
District ☒  
Site ☐  
Structure ☐  
Object ☐

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>25</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>34</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY/ Cemetery

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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

FUNERARY/ Cemetery

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

MID 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY/ Greek Revival

LATE VICTORIAN/ Gothic

MID-19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY/ Exotic Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; METAL/ zinc, bronze; STONE/ granite, marble, sandstone, slate

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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#### Summary Paragraph

Elmwood Cemetery is a 50-acre municipal cemetery established in Norfolk County (now in the City of Norfolk), Virginia, in 1853. It is contiguous with Norfolk's first public cemetery, Cedar Grove, established in 1825 and Norfolk's first African American cemetery, West Point, established in 1873. West Point Cemetery was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007. A mid-nineteenth century grid design cemetery, Elmwood is filled with monuments and mausoleums that embody the pathos and symbolism of the Victorian period's romantic vision of death as a temporary sleep. Within its boundaries are works of nationally known sculptors Edward Field Sanford, Jr., and William Couper as well as memorial architect Harold Van Buren Magonigle. An oasis in the middle of the modern city of Norfolk, this outdoor museum contains a wealth of Victorian funerary art. Elmwood Cemetery thrives today as a great source of genealogical information and as a biographical representation of the history of Norfolk, of its artists and craftsmen, soldiers, sailors, and ordinary citizens, from the wealthiest of merchants to the poorest of commoners buried in "strangers and paupers" lots. Still in use today, it is a visual representation of the evolution of American funerary art reflecting the changing beliefs and tastes of successive generations. A comprehensive survey of the total number of monuments has never been done. Subtracting 10 acres for carriage and walking paths, there are approximately 40

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acres of grave space. Contributing resources include the Superintendent's Office Building (completed in 1931), 7 structures such as mausoleums and tombs and the cemetery wall, and 25 objects that are primarily sculptures, monuments, and statues. There are no non-contributing resources within the property.

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## Narrative Description

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

#### Layout / Plan

Located in the city of Norfolk, Virginia, Elmwood Cemetery was dedicated in 1853 as an extension of Cedar Grove Cemetery, which was established in 1825 as Norfolk's first architecturally planned and landscaped municipal cemetery. Elmwood is a significant example of a grid cemetery design that flourished in the mid-nineteenth century. Its original design is fundamentally unaltered. It was embellished by Victorian elements by the turn of the twentieth century.

Elmwood Cemetery lies approximately two miles northeast of the city center. It is bordered to the north by Hampton Roads Transit buildings and to the south by Princess Anne Road, which separates Elmwood Cemetery from Norfolk's first municipal burial ground, Cedar Grove Cemetery. It is bordered to the west by West Point Cemetery (Armistead Avenue), Norfolk's first African American cemetery. Elmwood is bordered to the east by a middle class neighborhood and a storm water retention pond.

#### Entrances and Circulation

There is one wrought-iron gated entrance to Elmwood Cemetery, along the southern border off Princess Anne Road. The entrance accommodates vehicles and is accessible to the public. There is also a wrought iron gated pedestrian entrance in the eastern wall. Both gates are original to the cemetery. When Elmwood was established, there was one main oyster-shell-paved thoroughfare that ran north and south and another running east and west, forming a cross. This thoroughfare is now a paved road. There are grassy carriage and walking paths that crisscross the cemetery in a grid pattern. These carriage paths enabled a lot owner to drive up to and stop directly beside his lot. The grid design of the cemetery is landscaped in a picturesque manner with indigenous trees and shrubs, including, as the name implies, elm trees.

#### Topography

Some burial plots are slightly rounded above the grade of the land to give depth to the picturesque park design as well as to create natural drainage. Otherwise, the majority of land within the cemetery consists of relatively flat planes.

#### Constructed Elements (walls, fences, mausoleums, tombs, steps, vaults, buildings)

Elmwood Cemetery was originally enclosed by an eight foot high brick wall that was constructed in 1853 when the cemetery was established. The south wall was demolished in the late nineteenth century when the marsh and creek were filled in and the cemetery was expanded to include this newly created land. In the 1940s, a portion of the eastern wall fell and was replaced

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with a chain link fence. In 2010, another section of the eastern wall was destroyed by a fallen tree; and in 2011, a small portion of the northern wall was toppled by construction pile driving for the new Hampton Roads Transit building. The bricks from the latter two incidents have been saved and put in storage until the funds are available for reconstruction. The iron-gated entrance remains on the south side of the cemetery.

Enclosing individual and groups of gravesites, fencing, originally designed to keep livestock from destroying the stones, evolved into purely decorative and sometimes elaborate and aesthetically pleasing symbols of ownership. Most family lots, as well as organizational lots, were defined by these physical boundaries, most notably iron fencing and stone coping. There were also ornamental gates and steps with the names of lot owners carved into them. Some featured marble or granite posts located at each corner of the lot that were connected with galvanized pipe or chain fitted into cast iron sockets. Most of the coping was granite but marble was also used. Other enclosures included hedging and marble post and slab construction of a mortise and tenon design. There were also elaborate cast iron and unadorned wrought iron railing fences and brick walls. Some families chose the exedra to define their lot. The elaborate cast-iron fences often featured symbolic patterns such as ivy and clusters of grapes or grape vines, with post finials of flowers, flower urns or church spires. A particularly notable extant example is in the cast iron fence that surrounds the Todd lot. It employs the motifs of the fruited grapevine, symbolizing the blood of Christ and the resurrection.

Little of the cemetery's iron work has survived the ravages of time and vandalism unscathed. There are sections that are missing. Most gates and many finials are gone. Some fences deteriorated to such a degree that the cemetery removed them because they were safety hazards. Still others were stolen and sold for scrap or to antique shops. One can see countless family plots where the coping has holes or rust stains indicating that there was once an iron fence enclosing the lot. The missing ironwork is the most altered part of today's landscape. Almost no manufacturer's markings have survived on the extant iron fencing, although local newspapers of the time contained advertisements of companies that could supply such ornamental work.

The eye-catching Core Mausoleum, located in the Elmwood extension section, Block 19, was constructed between 1910 and 1915.<sup>1</sup> Its architecture and accompanying sculptures reflect the Greek, Early Romanesque, and Exotic (Egyptian) revival styles. The largest mausoleum in Elmwood, the Core Mausoleum was erected by the executors of John H. Core's will. When Core died in 1910, he stipulated in his will that his executors were to erect a mausoleum for him and for his wife. He instructed that they were to spend \$100,000, "NO MORE, NO LESS" on this edifice, to be crafted:

*..."out of the best Vermont granite with two, if necessary more, heavy bronze doors for entrance therein and upon a piled and concreted foundation with all the light and air possible to be had and of the most substantial and enduring workmanship and out of the best and most substantial and most enduring materials with the best and most substantial and enduring hinges and locks to be had with substantial and suitable covers to protect the locks from the elements and with all necessary appurtenances, appendages and belongings. The said mausoleum must have a heavy bronze*

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*sarcophagus large enough to hold my wife's casket and body and my casket and my body to be placed in the center of said mausoleum. ...the said mausoleum facing to the south..."*

According to local oral tradition, the request for the mausoleum to face south was indicative of Core's Confederate Civil War service as it violates the traditional Christian practice of east-west burials. The Cores are also oriented south/north in their sarcophagus.

Following his last wishes, Core's executors built a three-story edifice resembling a Greek temple. It has four fluted Doric columns across the front portico, which is four feet above grade level. The entrance faces south and is fitted with an eight foot bronze and plate glass door covered with a bronze grill adorned with butterflies and scarabs (symbols of resurrection). A movable scarab protects the keyhole. Light filters through east and west windows. Inside the mausoleum the bronze sarcophagus sits on a raised marble platform. Biographical details, also dictated in Core's will, are inscribed in raised bronze letters on the side of his sarcophagus. It is also inscribed with an epitaph stating that Martha's "devotion to and affection for her husband was unbounded," and that Core "loved her with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his mind and with all his strength." The interior domed ceiling is accentuated with mosaic tiles. Two bronze sculptures grace the entrance to the mausoleum, Romanesque in style. These were created by Edward Field Sanford, Jr. (1886-1951), best known for his 1923 sculpture for the state capitol at Sacramento, California. The Core sculptures were cast by Roman Bronze Works in New York in 1915. The mausoleum was designed by famed American memorial architect, Harold Van Buren Magonigle (1867-1935).

The LeKies Mausoleum, located at Elmwood Block 7<sup>th</sup> Alley East, Lot 24, is a superb example of Gothic Revival architecture. Emma Lekies (1842-1914) commissioned John D. Couper of Couper Marble Works to erect a mausoleum to entomb the remains of her husband, John (1840-1890), after his death at the age of 51.<sup>2</sup> Couper called on his son, American sculptor William L. Couper (1853-1942), to design the great bronze doors and the ornamental bronze railings, gates, and urns that adorn the mausoleum grounds. The mausoleum was completed in 1892. Constructed with crossed gables and a light tower, culminating in a cross and crown, the mausoleum resembles a small church or chapel. A stained glass window is situated in the south wall, protected by a bronze screen. Entry to the lot was originally up two steps, through two short bronze gates of aesthetic, fan shaped design (stolen in 1997). On either side of the walk to the mausoleum were two large bronze urns, the designs for which are contained in the Couper family papers cataloged in the archives of the Virginia Historical Society. One urn was broken from its granite base and is in storage in the cemetery office. The remaining urn has suffered damage, and is missing the spirals and filigree of the original design.

There are many mausoleums of various styles and architecture represented in Elmwood. One of the earliest styles is the beehive or oven tomb. These brick and stone tombs, half cylindrical in shape, appear to provide space for the entombment of about six individuals. However, a recently refurbished tomb revealed chambers below the ground that allowed for the entombment of 19 individuals. The Williams family beehive tomb (1854) is notable for its striking ornamental iron work. The Newton family beehive tomb (1870), constructed of granite blocks, is an excellent

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example of Romanesque Revival architecture. The Denby beehive tomb (1860) is constructed of brick and limestone.

The current superintendent's office building at Elmwood was designed by local architect Wickham C. Taylor (1882-1963) and drawn by Clarence Meakin (1905-1986), who was Wickham Taylor's draftsman from 1924 to 1933. Construction began in the spring of 1931 and was completed that fall. The old superintendent's building was torn down in November 1931, following completion of the new one. R.R. Richardson was the contractor. The building is Colonial Revival or, more specifically, Palladian Revival, in design.

A public receiving vault, built in 1894, sits in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Elmwood's West Avenue and Third Cross Alley.

### **Confederate Burials**

The Pickett-Buchanan Memorial Lot contains 40 graves belonging to Confederate soldiers who fought under General George Edward Pickett (1825-1875), "the hero of Gettysburg." General Pickett's brother, Charles Pickett, lived in Norfolk and proposed naming the Confederate veterans' organization to jointly honor his brother and Admiral Franklin Buchanan (1800-1874), who served in the Confederate navy and commanded the CSS *Virginia* on the first day of the Battle of Hampton Roads, 8 March 1862. Charles Pickett is buried in Elmwood.

The Norfolk Light Artillery Blues Lot contains 19 graves of militia members, 13 of whom remain unidentified. This former Confederate state militia company is now called Battery B, 111<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery, Virginia National Guard (Norfolk Blues). This lot also contains a monument to the 29<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. The gate to the Norfolk Light Artillery Blues lot is one of the few original gates remaining at Elmwood, and is notable for its motif of crossed cannon. The gate includes the date of the Virginia militia unit's founding, 1828.

Although not buried in Elmwood himself, Norfolk native Father Abram Joseph Ryan, Poet Laureate of the Confederacy, purchased a lot in the cemetery to be used for the burial of unknown Confederate soldiers. The stone's inscription reads:

*In this lot rest in sleep sixty Confederate dead. We know not who they were, but the whole world knows what they were. They died far from their homes, but fill heroes' graves and Glory keeps ceaseless watch about their tomb.*

### **Monuments**

Cemetery markers at Elmwood are eclectic in design, with many dating from the Victorian era. All gravestones are oriented in the classic east/west manner. Some graves are marked by a headstone, footstone, and "side rails" symbolizing a bed frame, with a blanket of ivy between the headstone and footstone. This form of grave marking epitomizes the Victorian romantic notion that the dead were only sleeping, awaiting the final and glorious resurrection. Many of these ivy-covered graves may still be seen today. Monuments and sculpture are constructed with a variety of materials including marble, granite, concrete, sandstone, bronze, and zinc.



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The Vieth/Dalton family monument in Elmwood Cemetery includes a relief panel portraying the departed resting against the tree of life and being visited by a guiding angel whose right hand holds the cross and crown, and whose left arm is held aloft with finger pointing heavenward. An arch of clinging ivy tops the relief. The panel is flanked by two urns with burning flames and topped by another urn draped with a mourning pall.

The tree of life was a popular motif in Victorian cemeteries. It is often replicated as a severed tree trunk with lopped off limbs, symbolic of the life cut short. There are areas in which the bark has been pulled back, the very fabric of life being torn away through death. These areas usually display the name of the deceased and his date of birth and death. The base of the tree trunk is often adorned with ferns, a symbol of mourning. Of the many examples in Elmwood, two are particularly representative of this theme. One is the A. A. Stewart family lot, which features the stubs of many tree limbs protruding from the main trunk, each of which is engraved with the name and birth and death dates of a family member. The large tree of life is the family lot marker situated in the middle of the lot. Each individual grave is marked by a pile of three tree logs.<sup>3</sup> The other significant tree of life is on the Cruiser family lot. There a towering tree of life is accompanied by a mourning bench styled of pieces of tree limbs, bark included, and with a rough-hewn seat in the tradition of the Arts and Crafts movement.

A unique adaptation of the tree of life was erected in 1892 for the 13-year old, George L. Babcock (1879-1892). The inscription area for the birth and death dates is the representation of the wooden seat of a rope swing leaning against the base of the tree trunk, the swing's rope curling around the tree trunk, pooling onto the ground. According to family descendants, George died after falling from the swing and suffering fatal head injuries.

Obelisks, usually four-sided figures with the sides tapering upward and culminating in a pyramid, symbolize resurrection and eternity. The tallest and most impressive of Elmwood's many obelisks is the monument memorializing William Henry Turner (1814-1885) of Isle of Wight County, Virginia. The twenty-five foot tall Turner family obelisk was toppled by hurricane Hazel in 1954. The monument lay in three pieces at its base until the Friends of Norfolk's Historic Cemeteries completed repairs to it in 2004.

A fine example of an allegorical tablet may be found on the monument of Dr. George L. Upshur (1822 -1855). The towering obelisk features a dramatic tableau at the top of the front face, with an hourglass, broken columns, and two figures – one of a standing angel, the finger of his right hand pointing heavenward, leaning over the kneeling figure of a female in mourning, her right hand also pointing heavenward.

Victorian sentimentality perhaps manifests itself most clearly at the gravesites of children, where youthful guardian angels watch over the young ones. It was customary to denote the innocence of childhood with the inclusion of lambs on children's stones. Another symbol frequently used on a child's grave was a scallop shell with an infant sleeping inside, symbolic of new life and resurrection. Two similar stones on separate graves depict this symbolism, one of which is 'Little Ladie Virginia' and the other marks the final resting place of little Mattie Bew Jarvis (1906-1907), daughter of R. M. and Mamie A. Jarvis. The Jarvis child's inscription reads "Budded on

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earth to bloom in heaven.” Little is known about Ladie Virginia and there is no interment card for her on file. She was buried with Mamie H. Foster (1863-1889), leading one to surmise that they are a poignant example of a too-common cause of death in the 19<sup>th</sup> century – a mother dying in childbirth and a stillborn child.

Other children’s graves in Elmwood are marked with sculptures of young children. One is marked with a life-size sculpture of the child who is interred below. The sculpture, created by the John D. Couper Marble Works, is the likeness of William Sherwood Hyslop Stewart (1890-1892), who sits atop his grave, his feet with button-up shoes crossed at the ankles, his smocked eyelet gown falling just to the top of the shoes. In his small hands he holds a rose with broken stem, symbolizing a life cut short and the beauty and brevity of life. <sup>4</sup> “Little Willie,” an only child, was conceived when his mother was 44 and died of measles at the age of 16 months. His mother composed this melancholy poem for his epitaph, which is carved into his footstone:

*I cannot touch thy hand nor see thy face,  
I never more shall press my lips to thine,  
Asleep within thy lonely resting place,  
Thou wilt not wake for any words of mine.*

*Farewell my son, I leave you in God’s keeping,  
Tis well for thee at rest from all earth’s care,  
I would that by your side I now were sleeping,  
Farewell my Willie, farewell my darling.*

*Forget thee!  
Oh when life shall cease to thrill this heart of mine,  
And not till then will I forget one look or tone of thine.  
Forget thee!  
Tis a bitter word I would it were unsaid.  
Forgetfulness is not of life but with the silent dead.*

A life-sized mourning figure stands draped at the foot of the Anne S. Outten (1798-1874) monument, a small wreath of flowers in her hand. The circular wreath symbolizes eternity – victory over death. At the head is a tablet adorned with a bas-relief of a bouquet of lilies and roses, lilies symbolic of purity and resurrection and roses of love and beauty and the brevity of life. A fringed mourning drape covers the top and sides of the tablet.

Inspiration from Gothic art and architecture can be found on the Weston lot in Elmwood. The Gothic canopy design, an open Gothic arch, was used to ‘enshrine’ an image. With its religious associations, the canopy “primarily denotes the spiritual ideals and virtues of the person commemorated,” suggest McDowell and Meyer. The shrine is dedicated to “My Only Sister,” Mary Josephine Weston (1829-1854). Enshrined beneath the canopy is a graceful reclining mourning figure. On the three corners of the arch are representations of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

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An alternative to the stone and marble monument was the “white bronze” or zinc marker. These distinctive bluish-gray colored markers are made of pure zinc, a non-magnetic metal that is heavier than iron but not as heavy as lead. All were made by the Monumental Bronze Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut, who coined the term “white bronze.” This alternative, a product of the Industrial Revolution, was cheaper and faster to obtain than stone. It was cast of stock designs and had bolted-on plates that featured symbols and motifs of one’s choice; one plate was reserved for the name and dates of birth and death of the dearly departed. The monument erected in 1882 for Elizabeth Benson (1821-1880) is an example of a zinc marker. It displays a kneeling angel in prayer atop a base depicting the wreath (victory over death), lily of the valley (purity), sheaves of wheat (the divine harvest), and the handshake (farewell to earthly existence). The base includes inscriptions of name, dates of birth and death and verses of scripture. The Benson monument was erected at the behest of Norfolk Mayor John B. Whitehead as a tribute to Elizabeth’s son, Christopher Columbus Benson (1844-1880), who took his life while serving as Norfolk’s Chief of Police.<sup>5</sup> Mrs. Benson committed suicide nine months later. The two rest side by side under the inscription “Mother and Son.” There are several other zinc markers of various designs, including an obelisk, in Elmwood.

### Vegetation

Elmwood Cemetery contains hundreds of mature trees including oak trees, pines, magnolias, elms, cedars, dogwoods, holly trees, maples, sycamores, willows, and others. Most are in good to excellent condition. There are also several flowering trees and shrubs within the cemetery. These include azaleas, forsythia, camellias, crepe myrtle and others.

### Inventory of Listings within Property - (C = Contributing; NC = Non-Contributing)

Sites	C	NC	Buildings	C	NC	Structures	C	NC	Objects	C	NC
Elmwood Cemetery	√										
			Elmwood Cemetery Superintendent's Office	√							
						Receiving Vault	√				
						Core Mausoleum	√				
						LeKies Mausoleum	√				
						Denby Beehive Tomb	√				
						Williams Beehive Tomb	√				
						Newton Beehive Tomb	√				

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Sites	C	NC	Buildings	C	NC	Structures	C	NC	Objects	C	NC
									Wrought Iron Gated Entrance	√	
						Wall	√				
									Edward Field Sanford sculptures at Core	√	
									Johann & Carl Zealand Jorgenson stone	√	
									Norfolk Light Artillery Blues Gate	√	
									Vieth/Dalton monument	√	
									George T. Thomas bed	√	
									A. A. Stewart tree of life monument	√	
									George L. Babcock tree of life monument	√	
									William Henry Turner obelisk	√	
									Dr. George L. Upshur monument	√	
									Capt. Frederick Williams monument	√	
									Mattie Bew Jarvis scallop shell monument	√	
									Little Ladie Virginia scallop shell monument	√	
									Marie McKay statue	√	
									William S. H. Stewart statue	√	
									Anne S. Outten mourning figure	√	

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Sites	C	NC	Buildings	C	NC	Structures	C	NC	Objects	C	NC
									Anne S. Outten headstone	√	
									Mary Josephine Weston monument	√	
									Elizabeth & C. C. Benson monument	√	
									Euphania Couper bronze recording angel sculpture	√	
									Pickett-Buchanan Confederate Lot obelisk	√	
									Father Abram Ryan tablet	√	
									Gov. Tazewell box tomb	√	
									Seaman's Friend Society Lot	√	
									W. S. Stewart footstone & inscription	√	
<b>Total Sites</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>Total Buildings</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>Total Structures</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>Total Objects</b>	<b>25</b>	

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- ☐ B. Removed from its original location
- ☒ C. A birthplace or grave
- ☒ D. A cemetery
- ☐ E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- ☐ F. A commemorative property
- ☐ G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY

ART

ARCHITECTURE

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1853-1931

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1855 – yellow fever epidemic

1861-1865

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Tazewell, Littleton Waller, Sr.

Grigsby, Hugh Blair

Hope, James Barron

Wright, David Minton

Taylor, Walter Herron

Hughes, Robert Morton

Sloane, William

Forrest, William S.

Berkley, Lycurgus, Sr.

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Couper, John Deiterich

Couper, William

Sandford, Edward Field, Jr.

Magonigle, Harold Van Buren

Taylor, Wickham C.

Meakin, Clarence C.

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

Elmwood Cemetery is a 50-acre municipal cemetery established in Norfolk County (now in the City of Norfolk), Virginia, in 1853. It is contiguous with Norfolk's first public cemetery, Cedar Grove, established in 1825. Elmwood is filled with an abundance of Victorian funerary art and displays a wealth of material culture relating to the Victorian attitudes toward death and mourning. It contains the graves of individuals and groups who made noteworthy contributions to the city, state, and nation. The works of both local and nationally recognized artisans, sculptors and stonemasons may be found there. It contains abundant resources for the study of the social, political, economic, cultural and ethnic heritage of the area. Elmwood continues to serve as an active city cemetery. Elmwood Cemetery is locally significant under Criteria A and C and areas of significance are Social History, Art, Architecture, and Landscape Architecture. The property is locally significant under Criterion B as the final resting place for numerous individuals whose contributions to Norfolk's development are significant, as well as historic figures who achieved prominence on a statewide or larger scale, in particular the following individuals: Littleton Waller Tazewell, Sr., Hugh Blair Grigsby, James Barron Hope, David Minton Wright, Walter Herron Taylor, Robert Morton Hughes, William Sloane, William S. Forrest, and Lycurgus Berkley, Sr. Elmwood Cemetery meets Criteria Considerations C and D as it derives significance from its association with historic events and individuals and its design characteristics. Elmwood's period of significance begins with the establishment of the cemetery in 1853 and ends with the construction of the Superintendent's Office in 1931.

Two significant historical events are intertwined with the history of Elmwood Cemetery. In 1855, just two years after its dedication, a yellow fever epidemic ravaged the City of Norfolk. Thousands of people died and many found final rest in Elmwood. More than 100 victims were buried in family plots and are identified by markers at Elmwood. As the pace of the fever escalated and as many as 80 deaths a day were recorded, the supply of coffins ran short and many victims now rest in mass, unmarked graves. Two first-hand accounts were written by local historian William S. Forrest and Presbyterian Minister George Dodd Armstrong. They were entitled *The Great Pestilence in Virginia* and *The Summer of the Pestilence: A History of the Ravages of the Yellow Fever in Norfolk, Virginia, A.D. 1855*, respectively. It is estimated that there were more than four thousand deaths in Norfolk and Portsmouth. A local chapter of the Howard Association, named after eighteenth century British philanthropist and prison reformer John Howard, was established in Norfolk and one of their first tasks was to bury the dead.<sup>6</sup>

Less than a decade later, the American Civil War had major impact on the City of Norfolk and the cemetery, and contributed more untimely burials in family plots and in specific areas allotted to Confederate veterans, both known and unknown. There are over 400 Confederate and Union veterans buried in Elmwood. The imposing Lekies Mausoleum (1892) and Core Mausoleum (1915) were also completed during the period of significance.



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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Elmwood Cemetery is closely associated with the development of municipal cemeteries in the City of Norfolk. Its original establishment and subsequent evolution are illustrative of changing funerary art and social practices, particularly with regard to the Victorian period. Cedar Grove Cemetery, the first architecturally planned and landscaped burial ground in Norfolk, was established in 1824 following an ordinance restricting private burial grounds within city limits. By 1850, it was clear that burial lots in Cedar Grove would soon be sold out and there was a need for more city cemetery space. John and Rebecca Tunis sold the City of Norfolk a tract of land known as Farmingdale for the creation of a new cemetery, Elmwood. Located due north of Cedar Grove Cemetery but separated by a narrow creek, the two cemeteries were originally connected by a bridge. The creek and surrounding marshes were filled in by the 1890s, expanding burial space and allowing the extension of the “Road to Princess Anne” which now separates the two cemeteries. Elmwood Cemetery is adjacent to Norfolk’s first African American cemetery, West Point, established in 1873. The site of West Point Cemetery was in use as early as 1830 as a potters’ field, a place where strangers and the local indigent were laid to rest. It was officially named Calvary Cemetery in 1873 and renamed West Point in 1877. West Point Cemetery was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007.

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Norfolk was established in August 1682 as a result of the June 1680 British Act for Cohabitation and Encouragement of Trade and Manufacture that ordered the formation of a port town of 50 acres in each Virginia county. The “Towne of Lower Norfolk County” was bounded on the east, west and south by the Elizabeth River; and on the north by a creek that would become today’s City Hall Avenue. Norfolk’s deep, natural, ice-free harbor was the reason for her creation and has continued to be the backbone of the local economy. From the beginning, Norfolk has served as a major east coast commercial center and a strategically important naval port with a shipbuilding and ship repair industry that began in the 18th century.

Norfolk became a Borough in 1736. It grew steadily and had a population of 6,000 in 1775. During the American Revolution, on January 1, 1776, British forces bombarded Norfolk from ships anchored off shore. Patriot factions completed the destruction so the British could not house their army here. Only the walls of the Borough Church – today’s St. Paul’s Episcopal – remained standing. Citizens returned and began to rebuild. By 1800, with a population of 7,000, Norfolk was the eighth largest town in America. Norfolk’s first cemetery was that of the Borough Church.

The 1807 attack on the USS frigate *Chesapeake* by the HMS *Leopard* offshore was a contributing factor in President Thomas Jefferson’s decision to ask Congress to declare war on Great Britain in 1812. The ensuing British Navigation Acts and Jefferson’s Embargo Act closed the port and all but crippled the local economy. There was a gradual return to prosperity, leading to Norfolk’s incorporation as a city in 1845.

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In 1855, one-third of Norfolk's resident population died during a yellow fever epidemic. All aspects of daily life were interrupted and many residents fled the area, never to return. A local doctor, Dr. George L. Upshur (1822 – 1855) warned of the impending Yellow Fever outbreak here. He was ridiculed for his perceived hysteria and some critics referred to the forecasted malady as "Upshur Fever." When the epidemic did occur, Dr. Upshur was blamed for not raising more of an alarm. When Dr. Upshur fell victim to the fever, a monument was erected for him by the Masonic Fraternity of the City of Norfolk "to perpetuate a remembrance of the many virtues of their amiable and distinguished brother, Past Master, George L. Upshur, M.D. who, while in the philanthropic discharge of his duties, fell a victim to the scourge of 1855."

Seven years later, one of the most famous naval battles in history was played out within view of the city by the first two ironclad battleships – the USS *Monitor* and CSS *Virginia* (formerly the USS *Merrimac*). Two months later, in May 1862, Norfolk was surrendered to Union forces and was under Federal occupation for the remainder of the Civil War.

The world came to Norfolk in 1907 when the Jamestown Exposition, commemorating the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first permanent English settlement in America, was held at Sewell's Point. In 1917 the Exposition grounds became home to the US Naval Operating Base, today's Naval Station Norfolk. Two World Wars more than doubled the city's population and a series of annexations ending in 1959 brought Norfolk to her current size.

In recent years, revitalization programs have led to changes throughout the city. A vibrant downtown commercial hub mixes with a menu of cultural offerings, educational opportunities, diverse neighborhoods and a comfortable blend of the old and new. From a tiny town of 50 acres, Norfolk has grown to 61.86 square miles and a population of more than 230,000.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

**Criterion A:** *Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.*

Elmwood is significant under **Criterion A** because its occupants reflect the patterns of our local history. In addition to the yellow fever epidemic of 1855 and the American Civil War, the graves of young children and infants remind us of the fragility of 19<sup>th</sup> century life. The many graves of those who made their living in the maritime trade reflect the importance of the port to Norfolk's way of life.

## SOCIAL HISTORY

Much social and genealogical history may be gleaned from inscriptions and epitaphs. It was during the 1850s that state and local governments enacted legislation to record the births, deaths, and marriages of all Americans. The 1850 Federal Population Schedule included information of a genealogical nature for the first time, perhaps leading to a general interest in genealogy and in leaving a permanent record for future generations. Thus we begin to see markers that included not only dates of birth and death but often also place of birth, date of immigration, place of death, spouse's name, date and place of marriage, parentage, and sometimes children's names.

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One finds reference to fraternal and patriotic organizations, military rank, profession, public office, and charitable work. Through an examination of the inscriptions on Elmwood's monuments, one may explore the cultural and ethnic roots of this important maritime center. Many people buried at Elmwood had familial connections to First Families of Virginia, Jamestown settlers, the American Revolution, War of 1812, Civil War, Society of the Cincinnati, fraternal associations, and others.

In this public cemetery, social status was literally set in stone. Wealthier Norfolk families laid claim to the largest lots and adorned them with ostentatious monuments inscribed with tragically poetic epitaphs while commissioning sculptures of recording angels and mourning figures to watch over their loved ones. Slightly more modest memorials were erected by the middle class citizenry.

To quote authors Peggy McDowell and Richard Meyer in their book, *The Revival Styles in Memorial Art*:

With the ever-growing influence of the middle class, in particular, came a nouveau riche interest in material manifestations of one's status and family's heritage. This materialism would become especially evident in funeral panoply and rituals, where, amongst its several manifestations, it fostered the desire on the part of many people to build ever more impressive mausoleums, tombs, and cemetery monuments rather than continue to be content with erecting the simpler and more traditional tombstone or slab.

Norfolk's cemeteries were segregated until the 1970s, another reflection of contemporary social practices.

Norfolk is an important naval and commercial seaport city that contributed to the development of national trade routes and the naval history of the United States. At Elmwood, in addition to the graves of prominent military leaders, there are hundreds of graves of those who made their living in the naval and maritime industries, from the lowly seaman to captains, commodores and admirals.

The monument to Captain Frederick Williams (1800-1877), a tall obelisk topped by an urn with a wreath, is noteworthy because of its lengthy and interesting epitaph, which offers a brief summary of a life at sea: "He entered the service in Germany in 1818 and arrived in Virginia in 1820 and continued ocean life till 1839. Was Master thirty-five years crossing the Atlantic 123 times without disaster or serious accident to vessel or subordinates. He was a man of intelligence, kind, affable, and sincere and when overtaken by disease trustingly committed himself to Him whose protecting providence he had ever gratefully acknowledged."

Elmwood accommodates not only family lots but also separate lots for fraternal and benevolent organizations, war veterans, churches, and society's disenfranchised. Family lots originally consisted of 18 graves. Over the years some lots were subdivided and resold. Various organizations purchased memorial lots for the burial of their membership. As the sentimental

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Victorians now desired romantic funerary art, ordinary stonemasons found it necessary to hire craftsmen with artistic abilities. Families and organizations were anxious to adorn their lots with sometimes elaborate, even grandiose monuments.

Outsiders have also found a place of repose in Elmwood. Among them were Johanna Jørgensen, the pregnant wife of the Norwegian barque *Dictator's* Captain Jørgen M. Jørgensen, and the couple's four-year-old son Carl Zealand Jørgensen. The *Dictator* was broken up in a storm off the Virginia Beach shore on Good Friday, March 27, 1891, with 17 aboard. Only ten survived. Through the efforts of the Norwegian consul and several local groups, the dead were laid to rest. Mrs. Jørgensen and her young son found refuge in graves donated by the Klepper family. They lie beneath a marker inscribed in Norwegian, with the symbol of a handshake and the word "Farewell."<sup>7</sup>

The impressive elaborately carved monuments not only served to illustrate one's social status but also illustrated the Victorian sentimentality of life, death and immortality. The concept that the dead are merely sleeping is widely represented. In fact, the word "cemetery," from the Greek for "sleeping chamber," came to replace the terms "graveyard" and "burial ground." The word "coffin" was replaced with the more romantic term "casket," a repository for precious valuables. Many epitaphs even included the line "He is not dead, but just asleep" or "Asleep in Jesus" or "We shall sleep but not forever; there will be a glorious dawn." Monuments were designed to include symbols of the transience of earthly life and the rewards of the Christian afterlife. Ever present Bible verses lavishly extolled the virtues of the dearly departed. Lines of poetry on others reflect the romanticism of the era.

Family lots are dominated by memorials full of the romantic symbolism of death and resurrection, replacing the rather plain markers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Crudely designed skulls and cross bones gave way to romantic flowers and cherubs. These memorials were crafted by two dozen local and regional stone masons and sculptors of considerable talent.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most men belonged to a fraternal organization of one kind or another. There are more than 14 fraternal, patriotic, and benevolent organizations represented among Elmwood's 50 acres. One of these is the Seaman's Friends Society lot. With Norfolk's commerce, and often its livelihood, dependent upon the waters, it seems most fitting that the Seaman's Friend Society not only established themselves in the area in 1826, but also purchased a large lot, approximately one-half acre, in Elmwood in 1881. When a merchant seaman died in Norfolk, far from home, the society would see that he received a timely and decent Christian burial. The lot is marked by a black iron ship's anchor and capstan. The anchor is not only indicative of the maritime tradition of this society, but also illustrates the use of the anchor as the Victorian symbol of hope in the resurrection. Small numbered uniform upright marble slabs mark the individual graves, many of which are unidentified. In addition to the Seaman's Friend Society Lot, other fraternal and memorial lots include:

- ❧ Fireman's Memorial Lot
- ❧ Improved Order Of Redmen Lot

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- ☞ Elks Rest, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks Lot
- ☞ Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lot
- ☞ The Howard Association Lot
- ☞ Pickett-Buchanan Camp, Confederate Veterans Lot
- ☞ Norfolk Light Artillery Blues Militia Lot
- ☞ Father Ryan's Memorial Lot (for unknown confederate soldiers)
- ☞ The Ballentine Home for Older Women Lot
- ☞ Saint Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church Lot
- ☞ Paupers and Strangers Lot
- ☞ Family Lots removed from surrounding city and county lands because of development (many of these pre-date 1853)
- ☞ The Christadelphian Church Lot

**Criterion B:** *Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.*

Philanthropists, historians, politicians, poets, bankers, physicians, and business leaders are among those buried at Elmwood. In many instances, the gravesites are the only documented historic property associated with the individual. The cemetery is a place where the identities and contributions of these persons are preserved in the historic record and available to the public.

- ☞ **Governor Littleton Waller Tazewell, Sr.** (1774-1860) was a US Senator and 26<sup>th</sup> Governor of Virginia. He was a lawyer, senator, and governor of Virginia. Tazewell represented James City County in the Virginia House of Delegates (1798-1800) and succeeded John Marshall in the United States Congress (1800-1801). He practiced maritime law in Norfolk (1802 & ff) and was appointed spokesperson for the Borough in negotiations with the British in the years leading up to the War of 1812. He represented Norfolk in the General Assembly (1806-1806 and 1816-1817) and was elected to fill a vacancy in the United States Senate in 1824. During his term in the Senate, he served as a member of the constitutional convention of 1829-1830 and was appointed to a committee of seven tasked with writing a new constitution. He was elected Governor of Virginia in January 1834 and served for two years.
- ☞ **Hugh Blair Grigsby** (1806 – 1881) was a historian and author, and owner and editor of Norfolk's *American Beacon* newspaper. Grigsby represented Norfolk in the Virginia House of Delegates in 1828-1829 and the Virginia Constitutional Convention, along with Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, in 1829-1830. He was President of the Virginia Historical Society and Chancellor of The College of William & Mary (1871).
- ☞ **James Barron Hope** (1829-1887) was a poet who was named "Virginia's Laureate" in 1857. He wrote a poem for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the settlement at Jamestown on May 23, 1857. One of his poems was recited at the dedication of Crawford's statue of General George Washington in Richmond on February 22, 1858. He was a Captain in the Confederate Army and was chosen by Congress as the poet for the Yorktown Centennial Celebration in 1881. He was editor of the *Norfolk Virginian* (1867) and founder of the *Norfolk Landmark* (1873) newspapers; superintendent of Norfolk Public Schools (1885)
- ☞ **Dr. David Minton Wright** (1809-1863) was a Norfolk physician who was hanged for the murder of Union Army officer Alanson L. Sanborn. His trial and eventual execution

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gained national attention. President Abraham Lincoln was intimately involved in the affair.

- ✧ **Dr. Charles Rollin Grandy** (1871-1932) authored the law organizing the Virginia State Board of Health in the early 1900s and served as Chairman of the Virginia Committee of the International Congress on Tuberculosis. He was a huge supporter of the arts, working with William and Florence Sloane to establish the Norfolk Museum of Arts & Sciences, today's Chrysler Museum of Art.
- ✧ **Colonel Walter Herron Taylor** (1838-1916) was an American banker, lawyer, soldier, politician, author and railroad executive. He served as Lt. Colonel in the Confederate States Army and was aide-de-camp to General Robert E. Lee. He later served as Senator in the Virginia General Assembly. Taylor authored *Four Years with General Lee* and *Robert E. Lee: His Campaign in Virginia, 1861-1865*.
- ✧ **Robert Morton Hughes** (1855-1940) was a Virginia lawmaker who served as a president of The Virginia Bar Association and helped to establish what would become Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia.
- ✧ **William Sloane** (1867-1940) & **Florence Knapp Sloane** (1873 – 1953) were the driving force behind the Norfolk Museum of Arts & Sciences, now known as the Chrysler Museum of Art. They were philanthropists and founders of the Hermitage Museum.
- ✧ **William S. Forrest** (1816-1878) was a local historian who wrote *Historical and Descriptive Sketches of Norfolk and Vicinity* in 1853. His *The Great Pestilence in Virginia in 1856* was a firsthand account of the great yellow fever epidemic of 1855 in Norfolk and Portsmouth.
- ✧ **Lycurgus Berkley, Sr.** (1827-1881) was a drygoods dealer and real estate developer. He developed the Town of Berkley, which was annexed to the City of Norfolk in 1906.

**Criterion C:** *Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.*

Elmwood's distinctive characteristics reflect the mid- to late 19<sup>th</sup> century Victorian preoccupation with Greek, Gothic, and Exotic Revival architecture. The Victorian belief that death was only a period of sleep is made evident by the presence of Victorian funereal iconography displayed on monuments, mausoleums, and sculpture. There are works of nationally known sculptors Edward Field Sanford, Jr. and William Couper as well as memorial architect Harold Van Buren Magonigle (1867-1935) within its boundaries. It contains examples of the effect of the Industrial Revolution on the memorial art industry manifested in the zinc monuments of the Monumental Bronze Company. An oasis in the middle of the modern city of Norfolk, this outdoor museum contains a wealth of Victorian funeral art. It encompasses the combined works of over 25 local and national stone masons and artisans, employing multiple revival styles, all trying to achieve the ultimate memorial or crypt for their customers. These artisans churned out a wide variety of images and imagery epitomizing the Victorian client's belief in the eternity of the spirit manifested in angels, mourning figures, obelisks, classical columns, cherubs, lambs, allegorical tablets and many other designs. They also created elaborate cast and wrought iron fencing, exedrae, and enclosures of simpler design.

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## ART AND ARCHITECTURE

The impressive elaborately carved monuments at Elmwood served not only to illustrate one's social status but also to reflect the Victorian attitude toward life, death and immortality. The monuments are rich with symbols of the transience of earthly life and the rewards of the Christian afterlife. They include mourning figures, recording angels, guiding angels, guardian angels, obelisks, crosses, trees of life, allegorical tablets, funerary urns, life sized sculptures of small children, and broken columns, as well as beehive tombs and above-ground mausoleums.

The tree of life symbol was a naturalistic, romantic parallel to the broken classical column icon. The brokenness symbolized "melancholy ruin and untimely death," according to authors McDowell and Meyer. The use of columns as well as the Egyptian inspired obelisks allowed sculptors to create towering monuments, often reflecting the giant stature of one's role (or one's attributed role) in the community. Elmwood has numerous examples.

Nationally and internationally known sculptors such as William Couper and Edward Field Sanford, Jr., are represented here, as well as local and Virginia stone masons, and artisans from Baltimore and Philadelphia. Elmwood's striking artwork features work by stonemasons and sculptors including:

### ☞ **Norfolk**

M.P. Butcher of Norfolk (est. by 1851)

John D. Couper (1822-1909 Elmwood) owner of Couper Marble Works in Norfolk, Virginia

William Couper (1853-1942 Elmwood)

Robert Dalrymple (1799-1855 Elmwood) of Norfolk

Joseph B. Ennis of Norfolk (later E.V. Ennis and then Overmyer and Ennis) (est. by 1900)

John Powell Hall (1843- 1911, buried Elmwood) of Norfolk (The John Powell Hall Marble Works)

Lawson-Newton of Norfolk (est. by 1890s)

T. McCafferey of Norfolk

James O'Rourke of Norfolk (est. 1872)

### ☞ **Portsmouth**

Hewitt; C.L. Daughtery of Portsmouth

James Mulholland of Portsmouth (est. by 1880)

Ogg Stone Works of Portsmouth, Virginia (1899-present)

### ☞ **Virginia**

Thomas Chauncey of Alexandria, Virginia (est. 1880s)

Sands of the Richmond Marble Works (est. by 1875)

### ☞ **Baltimore**

Gaddess Brothers of Baltimore (est. by 1831)

Sisson and Sons Steam Marble Works of Baltimore (est. by 1848)

### **Philadelphia**

John Baird of Philadelphia owner of John Baird, Steam Marble Works (est. 1841)

J.M. Cessler's Sons of W. Philadelphia (est. by 1880s)

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Edwin M. Greble, marble cutter, of Philadelphia (1829-1883)

Steinmetz of Philadelphia (est. by 1854)

VanGunden and Young of Philadelphia (successors to John Baird)

VanGunden, Young and Drumm of Philadelphia (successors to John Baird) (est. mid 1800s)

☞ **New York**

Edward Field Sanford, Jr. (1886-1951)

☞ **London**

M. Doon and Company, London.

☞ **Location unknown**

J.T. Presson

W. Rutherford

Classic symbols from the Victorian iconography of death are heavily represented at Elmwood. These include:

- ☞ Anchors and Rope (hope in the life hereafter/seafaring profession)
- ☞ Angels Flying (rebirth)
- ☞ Bibles (often on the grave of a minister)
- ☞ Blind Justice with Scales
- ☞ Broken Columns (form the classical Greek and Roman; lives cut short)
- ☞ Broken Wreaths (a missing family member)
- ☞ Butterflies (symbol of resurrection)
- ☞ Cairns
- ☞ Casket shapes (repository for precious jewels)
- ☞ Crosses (Latin, Calvary, Lorraine, Greek, Celtic, Maltese, St Andrew's, and others)
- ☞ Crown with Cross (the reward for Christian righteousness)
- ☞ Dove (the Holy Spirit)
- ☞ Dove Flying (resurrection)
- ☞ Ferns (mourning)
- ☞ Flowers (the beauty and brevity of life; with broken stems symbolizing lives cut short)
- ☞ Guardian Angels often with arms protectively around a child's stone
- ☞ Guiding Angels with up-stretched arms, a finger pointing the way to heaven
- ☞ Hand with finger pointing upward to heaven
- ☞ Hands clasped in prayer
- ☞ Handshakes (farewell to earthly existence)
- ☞ Hourglass (passing of time)
- ☞ Hourglass Flying (time flies)
- ☞ Ivy (fidelity/eternity)
- ☞ Lambs (innocence)
- ☞ Life-sized figure of child sleeping (just asleep awaiting the final resurrection)
- ☞ Lily (purity)
- ☞ Mourning drapes used on varied types of monuments
- ☞ Mourning Figures (some standing alone, some in bas-relief; others clutching life sized crosses; others prostrate on stormy, rocky shores)



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- ☞ Obelisks (from the Egyptian pyramid symbolizing eternity/afterlife)
- ☞ Prayer/Mourning benches/Exedra
- ☞ Recording Angels writing the name of the deceased in the book of life
- ☞ Rosaries
- ☞ Scythe (death/the divine harvest)
- ☞ Sea Shells (the earthly pilgrimage/resurrection/new life)
- ☞ Sheaves of Wheat (the divine harvest)
- ☞ The Grim Reaper (death personified)
- ☞ The Masonic Emblem as well as those for the Elks, Eagles, Owls, Pythians, Red Men, Moose and Woodmen of the World.
- ☞ Three Chain Links (symbol of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows)
- ☞ Tree of Life (cast concrete, marble and granite)
- ☞ Upside-down torches (lives extinguished)
- ☞ Urns/Amphorae (mortality/an occupied grave; Egyptian belief that life would be restored in the future through the vital organs of the deceased placed in the urn)
- ☞ Urns with flames (the soul rising from the ashes of death)
- ☞ Urns with mourning drapes
- ☞ Weeping Willows (mourning)
- ☞ Wreaths (symbolic of victory over death)

In addition to the many examples of public and funerary art within Elmwood Cemetery, the Industrial Revolution produced its own art in the form of iron work. The following iron works companies are represented in Elmwood Cemetery:

- ☞ N. Cory (cast iron door to the H. Williams beehive tomb)
- ☞ Atlantic Iron Works Company, Norfolk, Virginia (in business before 1859) (cast iron door to the William Denby beehive tomb 1860)
- ☞ Norfolk Steam Ornamental and Cast Iron Rail Works (in business before 1859)
- ☞ Virginia Iron Works, Norfolk, Virginia
- ☞ Butt & Hodges, Norfolk, Virginia (gate to George Newton Family Lot, 1870)
- ☞ Elizabeth Iron Works, Norfolk, Virginia
- ☞ Norfolk Iron Railing and Manufacturing Company

## **ARCHITECTS / BUILDERS**

**Edward Field Sanford, Jr.** (1886-1951) - New York native Edward Field Sanford, Jr., created the imposing pair of large bronze sculptures that flank the entrance to the John H. Core Mausoleum at Elmwood. Sanford was a descendant of old New York and New England families. He studied at the Art Students League and the National Academy of Design in 1907 and 1908. He later attended the Academie Julian at Paris and the Royal Academy at Munich and traveled extensively in Europe, studying the sculpture of all periods. In 1914 he modeled a bronze "Pegasus" for the Rhode Island School of Design. He designed the large Romanesque-style Core sculptures in 1915. He designed fountains for the estate of Mr. Joseph C. Baldwin, Jr., Mount Kisco, New York; "A Nereid" for that of Mr. Benjamin Stern at Roslyn, Long Island, and others. In 1923, he was at work on his greatest achievement, the sculpture for the state capitol at

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Sacramento, which comprised two pediments, four colossal figures, two life-size bronze figures, and twenty bas-relief panels. He designed the frieze for the California State Library in Sacramento entitled "California's Gift to the World." From 1923 to 1925, he reorganized the department of sculpture of the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design, became the director, and inaugurated the Paris Prize. His designs for the Alabama Power Company Building, Birmingham, Alabama, included three colossal Gothic figures over the main door and a finial, 23 feet tall and 200 feet above ground level, representing electricity. He named the finial "Divinity of Light." The gilded nude statue of a woman clutching bolts of lightning in both hands, arms uplifted, was not without controversy for the time. The public, however, came to adore her and nicknamed her "Miss Electra." Another colossal figure was the "Victory" for the Payne Whitney Gymnasium, Yale University. He created two of the groups for the Bronx County Court House. A bronze façade was made for the Francis P. Garven Mausoleum in Woodlawn Cemetery and bronze doors for Girard College, Philadelphia. He carved in low relief an animal frieze of twelve colossal panels for the base of the New York State Roosevelt Memorial. Ill health caused him to retire from his profession in 1933. He then resided in the James Semple House, Williamsburg, Virginia.

**John Deiterich Couper** (1822-1909) - The greatest number of monuments of artistic merit in Elmwood can be attributed to the Couper Marble Works. First generation American John Deiterich Couper established his marble works on Granby Street in downtown Norfolk in 1848. Within a decade his work was transformed from simplistic stone tablets to more sophisticated monuments, reflecting the romanticism of the era. Many Couper angels and mourning figures populate the landscape of the cemetery. John Couper designed Elmwood's LeKies mausoleum. Couper's business records and original drawings and sketches are archived at the Virginia Historical Society. The business continued to operate here for 133 years

**William Couper** (1853-1942) - Born in Norfolk, Virginia, Couper studied in Munich and Florence before establishing himself in New York in 1897 as a portraitist and sculptor of busts in the modern Italian manner. He was the son of **John Deiterich Couper** (1822-1909), the son-in-law of sculptor Thomas Ball (1819-1911) and colleague of Daniel Chester French (1850-1931), sculptor of the seated figure of Abraham Lincoln at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC. William Couper collaborated with Louis Comfort Tiffany on several pieces. Couper is well known for his winged figures, such as the Recording Angel in Elmwood Cemetery, Norfolk, and allegorical figures Psyche and A Crown for the Victor, in the Montclair Art Museum. Couper lived in Montclair, New Jersey, until his death in 1942. Other works by William Couper include: the statue of "Johnny Reb" atop the Confederate Monument in downtown Norfolk, 1906; the bronze statue of Dr. Hunter Holmes McGuire at the Virginia State Capitol, Richmond; the statue of Captain John Smith overlooking the James River at Jamestown, Virginia; a bronze bust of Charles Darwin, created in New York in 1909 and presented to the American Museum of Natural History; a statue of Joseph Bryan, Monroe Park, Richmond, 1910; two marble sphinxes at Stanford Family Mausoleum at Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, 1908; and the statue of Moses atop the New York City Appellate Court Building.

**Harold Van Buren Magonigle** (1867-1935) - This American architect was best known for his memorials, including the Greek Revival Mausoleum for John H. Core and his wife at Elmwood.

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Magonigle was born in New Jersey and worked for Calvert Vaux, Rotch & Tilden and McKim, Mead & White before opening his own practice in 1903. He was the designer of the McKinley Memorial Mausoleum in Canton, Ohio, and the Liberty Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri. Both commissions won several awards. Magonigle and sculptor Attilio Piccirilli collaborated as architect and artist on two familiar monuments in New York City: the monument to the USS *Maine* in Columbus Circle, and on the Fireman's Memorial on Riverside Drive and West 100<sup>th</sup> Street. He also designed the Mason Monument in Detroit, Michigan, and the Burritt Memorial in New Britain, Connecticut. Mr. Magonigle's papers are held by the Drawings and Archives Department in the Avery Architectural and Fine Arts Library at Columbia University. An online listing of their holdings includes those for the Core Mausoleum.

**Wickham Curtis Taylor (1882-1963)** - Norfolk native Wickham C. Taylor was a residential and commercial architect. Taylor designed the 1931 Superintendent's Office at Elmwood. Other commercial designs included several Norfolk automobile dealerships. Taylor began his career as a draftsman for Norfolk architect Benjamin B. Mitchell in 1910.

**Clarence Meakin (1905-1986)** - A Norfolk native who received no formal architectural training, Meakin worked as a draftsman for Wickham C. Taylor from 1924 to 1933, and drew the plans for the Superintendent's Office at Elmwood. Meakin later worked as a designer for Peebles & Ferguson, Finlay F. Ferguson, Sr., and Vernon A. Moore before founding the firm of Clarence Meakin, Architects in 1959.

## LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Elmwood Cemetery is significant as an example of a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century cemetery laid out in a grid plan, with later Victorian-era embellishments and landscaping. It also has key features associated with the rural cemetery movement of the period. The cemetery's location originally was well beyond Norfolk's urban environs, although later growth gradually encompassed it. While featuring the flat topography typical of the Virginia Tidewater region, some burial plots are slightly rounded above the grade of the land to give depth to the picturesque park design as well as to create natural drainage. The architectural landscape was purposely designed to provide an aesthetically appealing pastoral setting. The main road and some carriage paths were paved with oyster shells, reflecting the use of local materials available through the shellfish industry, a vital part of Norfolk's maritime business. The grid design of the cemetery is landscaped in a picturesque manner with indigenous trees and shrubs, including, as the name implies, elm trees. Lot owners were allowed to further enhance their family lots with flowers and vines such as lilies, tulips, jonquils and the ever symbolic ivy. The cemetery was designed to integrate the stark reality of death within an uplifting pastoral setting of natural beauty and contemplation. Still in use today, Elmwood Cemetery is a visual representation of the evolution of American funerary art reflecting the changing beliefs and tastes of successive generations. The original layout has remained largely unaltered to the present day, as has been documented in Norfolk City Council records over the years.

An entry in Norfolk Council records of 1 April 1851 reads "Committee on alms house and new burying ground reported that the committee under orders of Council had selected & laid off as an

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addition to present cemetery [i.e., Cedar Grove] a piece of land belonging to city across creek in rear of Alms House & submitted plat made by John Ridley showing size and number of lots and recommended that price of square lots by \$40 and that of ½ and triangular lots in proportion . . . and that a joint committee be directed to advertise for proposals for enclosing with all necessary iron gates with a substantial brick wall.” This was the beginning of Elmwood Cemetery. Little is known about John Ridley. He is listed in the 1851-1852 Norfolk directory as a brick mason, and in the 1850 Norfolk City census as a brick mason, age 50. Ridley died in 1864 (date unknown) and is buried in Elmwood, the cemetery that he designed.

Later Council minutes record the passage of an ordinance (7 June 1853) approving the opening of Elmwood Cemetery. On 6 February 1855, Job Jakeman was paid \$300 to set out trees in the cemetery. Other ordinances that further developed the landscape of the cemetery included:

- 13 December 1876, an ordinance directing shelling (oyster shells) and bridging of intersections so as to “run the water off.”
- 6 March 1877, a resolution authorizing the cemetery committee to have the south wall raised as high as the other walls surrounding Elmwood.
- 5 November 1890, a resolution to expand the boundaries of Elmwood Cemetery, calling the section “Elmwood Improvement.” Sections in this new addition were numbered so that they could be identified by more than just lot and grave numbers.
- 7 October 1892, \$1,000 was allotted for the “tearing down and rebuilding” of the cemetery wall. However, it is unclear if this was ever actually done.
- 4 September 1894, a receiving vault (dead house) was purchased by the city for Elmwood Cemetery to hold bodies during the winter until the ground thawed and/or until the deceased’s family provided payment for interment.
- 16 December 1930, an appropriation for construction of an office building.
- 7 April 1931 an ordinance to allow construction of an office building to begin.
- 24 November 1931 an ordinance allowing the city to raze the old superintendent’s building in order to build a new office building on that site.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Cleveland, N. *A Hand-Book for Green-Wood*. New York: Bergen & Tripp, 1867.

Couper, Greta Elena. *William Couper: An American Sculptor on the Grand Tour, The Life and Works of William Couper (1853-1942)*. TreCavalli Press, 1988.

*Dictionary of American Biography*. New York: Scribner's Sons, 1928.

Jackson, Kenneth T., and Camilo Jose Vergara. *Silent Cities: The Evolution of The American Cemetery*. Princeton: Architectural Press, 1989.

McDowell, Peggy and Richard E. Meyer. *The Revival Styles in American Memorial Art*. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1994.

McElmurray, Joann Perry. *A Journey – From Then To Now, History of the Virginia Funeral Directors Association 1888-1988*. N.P. ,1988.

Mitchell, Mary H. *Hollywood Cemetery, the History of A Southern Shrine*. Richmond: The Library of Virginia, 1999.

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Pike, Martha V., and Janice Gray Armstrong. *A Time To Mourn, Expressions of Grief in Nineteenth Century America*. Stony Brook, New York: The Museums at Stony Brook, May 24 – November 16, 1980.

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Sloan, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984.

Newspaper Sources:

*The American Beacon* (newspaper, 25 April 1851).

*The Norfolk Landmark* (newspaper, various dates).

*The Norfolk Ledger Dispatch* (newspaper, various dates).

*The Norfolk Virginian* (newspaper, various dates).

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*The Southern Argus* (newspaper, 26 July 1851).

*The Virginian Pilot* (newspaper, various dates).

“Yellow Fever in Norfolk and Portsmouth, Virginia, 1855, as reported in the *Daily Dispatch* of Richmond, Virginia.

<http://www.usgwarchives.net/va/yellow-fever/yftoc.html> Last accessed 14 March 2013

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository: Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA; City of Norfolk, VA, Superintendent's Office, Elmwood Cemetery

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** VDHR # 122-0116

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** approximately 50 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

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- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 18 | Easting: 386443 | Northing: 4080196 |
| 2. Zone: 18 | Easting: 385632 | Northing: 4080325 |
| 3. Zone: 18 | Easting: 385934 | Northing: 4080204 |
| 4. Zone: 18 | Easting: 385851 | Northing: 4079764 |
| 5. Zone: 18 | Easting: 385489 | Northing: 4079901 |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Elmwood Cemetery lies approximately two miles northeast of the city center. The cemetery occupies tax parcel no. 1438106725 as recorded by the City of Norfolk. It is bordered to the north by Hampton Roads Transit buildings and to the south by Princess Anne Road. It is bordered to the west by West Point Cemetery (Armistead Avenue). Elmwood is bordered to the east by a middle class neighborhood and a storm water retention pond.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are those originally surveyed in 1853 plus the area to the south that was added when the creek and marsh were filled in during the late nineteenth century.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Tim Bonney/ President  
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date: March 15, 2013

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city or town: Norfolk state: VA zip code: 23504

e-mail: bobette.nelson@norfolk.gov

telephone: 757-441-2654

date: March 15, 2013

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.



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**Photo Log**

Name of Property: Elmwood Cemetery  
City or Vicinity: Norfolk  
County: n/a  
State: Virginia  
Name of Photographer: Tim Bonney  
Date of Photographs: October 2011  
Loc. of Original Digital Files: The Hunter House Victorian Museum  
240 W. Freemason St.  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
(757-623-9814)

PHOTO #	DESCRIPTION	CAMERA FACING
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0001	Wrought Iron Gated Entrance	N
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0002	Sloane Exedra	ENE
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0003	Todd Lot Cast Iron Fence	SW
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0004	Core Mausoleum	NNE
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0005	Core Mausoleum Door Bronze Grill with Butterfly Detail	NNE
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0006	Core Mausoleum Door Scarab Beetle Keyhole Cover	NNE
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0007	LeKies Mausoleum without Gates	SSE
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0008	Williams Tomb	E
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0009	Williams Tomb Door	E
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0010	Denby Tomb	NW
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0011	Ivy Covered Graves	NNW
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0012	Veith/Dalton Monument	NE

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PHOTO #	DESCRIPTION	CAMERA FACING
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0013	Veith/Dalton Monument Detail	NE
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0014	George J. Thomas Bed	W
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0015	Mattie Bew Jarvis Scallop Shell Monument	WSW
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0016	Marie McKay Statue/Sculpture	E
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0017	William S.H. Stewart Statue	NW
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0018	William S.H. Stewart Statue Inscription	NW
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0019	Keeling Sleeping Child Monument for infants Armand, Raphaele, and Frank W. Keeling	ENE
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0020	Elizabeth Benson Monument	SW
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0021	Pickett-Buchanan Lot	SW
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0022	Father Abram Ryan Lot	E
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0023	Carriage Paths	ENE
VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0024	Seaman's Friends Society Memorial Lot	SW
V VA_Norfolk_Elmwood Cemetery_0025	George W. Newton Beehive Tomb 1870	ENE

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> John H. Core, born in Bellehaven, Accomack County, Virginia, rode with Mosby's Battalion of Partisan Rangers during the Civil War, settled in Norfolk after the war, and married Martha Tarrant of Norfolk County. He was a general truck and hog farmer whose business was extensive and profitable. The Cores had no children.

<sup>2</sup> John LeKies (1840-1890), a French immigrant, died at age 51 leaving his wife, Emma (1842-1914), an estate estimated to be worth more than \$150,000, the bulk of which was her husband's interest in the LeKies and Collins Lumber Company.

<sup>3</sup> (These should not be confused with the Woodman of the World fraternal organization's trademark pile of logs for individual graves that include the WOW logo.)

<sup>4</sup> Another such sculpture was the statue of Marie McKay (1889-1893), which has been stolen from the cemetery twice (it was stolen in 1995, recovered in 1997, and stolen again in August 2001). The artist-signed statue, by John Powell Hall, honors the life of a three-year-old who died in March 1893, presumably from food poisoning. The statue is approximately three feet high and depicts a young girl, curls upon her shoulders, with a cross and chain about her neck. She leans against a severed tree trunk holding up the hem of her skirt filled with flower blossoms symbolizing promises unfulfilled.

<sup>5</sup> *Norfolk Virginian*, 29 January 1880, page 1.

<sup>6</sup> The most definitive and comprehensive history of the epidemic has been compiled by local historic archivist, Donna Bluemink, and can be accessed at <http://www.usgwarchives.net/va/yellow-fever/yftoc.html>.

<sup>7</sup> The ship's figurehead washed ashore after the storm had passed and stood near the boardwalk at 16<sup>th</sup> Street until being badly damaged by Hurricane Barbara in 1953. The figurehead was removed and a campaign began in Virginia Beach and in the *Dictator's* home port of Moss, Norway, to replace her. Norwegian sculptor Ørnulf Bast was commissioned to design the replacement statue. Bast would design not one, but two nine-foot bronze replicas of the original figurehead, and these would be unveiled on 22 September 1962, one at Virginia Beach and one in Moss, each facing out across the Atlantic Ocean. The pedestal of the Virginia Beach monument bears the inscription "I am the Norwegian Lady. I stand here, as my sister before me, to wish all men of the sea safe return home."